

Message

Sent: 4/24/2017 3:13:52 PM
To: Groff, Kimberly (DEP) [Kimberly.Groff@MassMail.State.MA.US]
Subject: MA DO criteria

Hi Kim,

After thinking about our TAC meeting last week, I don't believe that it is appropriate to apply the revisions to MA coastal DO criteria as discussed in our meeting to Class SA waters and Class SB waters in a blanket approach. I don't believe that this is consistent with MA WQS that describe Class SA waters as "excellent habitat". The Virginian Province approach is intended to provide the floor for DO standards and is not specifically designed to be protective of high quality waters. I think applying these revisions to SA waters would also be inconsistent with DEP's Antidegradation policy as well.

CLASS SA - These waters are designated as an excellent habitat for fish, other aquatic life and wildlife, including for their reproduction, migration, growth and other critical functions, and for primary and secondary contact recreation. In certain waters, excellent habitat for fish, other aquatic life and wildlife may include, but is not limited to, sea grass. Where designated in the tables to 314 CMR 4.00 for shellfishing, these waters shall be suitable for shellfish harvesting without depuration (Approved and Conditionally Approved Shellfish Areas). These waters shall have excellent aesthetic value.

Antidegradation Policy

The third component of the SWQS is the antidegradation rule that contains provisions designed to preserve and protect the existing beneficial uses and to minimize degradation of the state's water quality. These provisions restrict or prohibit the authorization of wastewater discharges to critical resource waters. Most notable is the Outstanding Resource Water (ORW) designation that applies to all Class A waters and certain Class B, Class SA and Class SB waters. These waters exhibit exceptional socio-economic, recreational, ecological and/or aesthetic qualities. ORWs include, but are not limited to, Class A public water supplies and their bordering vegetated wetlands and vernal pools certified as such by the Massachusetts Division of Fish and Game. Other waters designated as ORWs may include those protected by special legislation, as well as selected waters found in National Parks, State Forests and Parks, or Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs).

Thanks,

Toby

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